

# Transcript of the Testimony of

**Date:** January 9, 2018

**Case:** COMMUNITY MEETING FOR THE PROPOSED  
CONSOLIDATION OF LAZARO CARDENAS ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOL AND ROSARIO CASTELLANOS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**TOOMEY REPORTING**

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**January 9, 2018**

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COMMUNITY MEETING FOR THE PROPOSED CONSOLIDATION  
OF LAZARO CARDENAS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND ROSARIO CASTELLANOS  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

1 COMMUNITY MEETING PRESENTATION

2 TUESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2018

3 COMMENCING AT 6:00 P.M.

4  
5 HELD AT 2524 SOUTH CENTRAL PARK AVENUE

6 CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

7  
8 COMMUNITY MEETING FOR THE PROPOSED

9 CONSOLIDATION OF LAZARO CARDENAS

10 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND ROSARIO CASTELLANOS

11 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
12

13 The Report of Proceedings had in the  
14 Meeting of the above-entitled cause, taken before  
15 MELISSA A. BELICE, a Certified Shorthand Reporter in  
16 and for the County of Cook and State of Illinois, at  
17 2524 South Central Park Avenue, Chicago, Illinois,  
18 January 10, 2018, at 6:00 p.m.  
19  
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22  
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1  
2 CPS STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:  
3

4 CRISTINA CARRETO, LSC Facilitator

5 MINERVA GARCIA-SANCHEZ, Chief of Schools,  
6 Network.

7 DR. JEREMY FEIWELL, Principal of Cardenas and  
8 Castellanos  
9

10  
11 LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS:

12 Interpreter No. 1: Matt Ginsberg-Jaeckle

13 Interpreter No. 2: Sylvia Escarcega  
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(Following proceedings  
translated via Interpreter  
No. 1.)

MS. CARRETO: I just want to welcome everyone  
to the first two meetings that we're having  
regarding the consolidation of Castellanos and  
Cardenas Elementary.

So just a brief overview of how we're  
going to conduct the meeting. We're going to have  
an introduction of the meeting, then we'll have a  
presentation regarding school action, and then we'll  
take public comments.

Like I said, my name is Cristina Carreto.  
I'm the Family and Community Engagement Manager for  
CPS. We also have the Chief of Network here,  
Minerva Garcia Sanchez, who will be doing the  
presentation of some of the consolidation today.

The office of all of these departments  
are going to be here present after the meeting for  
any questions that you may have. If you can raise  
your hands, please, from the different departments.  
If you have any questions about any one of these  
different things -- everybody is okay? Thank you.

1 So they will be here during the meeting and after  
2 the meeting if you have any questions.

3 This meeting will last two hours. I'm  
4 going to be giving a presentation about the school  
5 action, and then there's also going to be time to  
6 listen to your comments from the public. We also  
7 have here a person who is taking notes as well as a  
8 court reporter. And that's very important because  
9 the comments, everything that's said in today's  
10 meeting in public will be taken to the Chief of  
11 Schools as well as the Board of Education so that  
12 they can make a more informed decision.

13 If you would like to add public comment,  
14 please make sure that you registered outside where  
15 they have the sign-in sheet. Each participant will  
16 have two minutes in order to ask questions or make  
17 comments. Every participant will also receive a  
18 warning once they are a minute away from finishing  
19 and once it is time to finish.

20 And so I just want to remind you of some  
21 important dates. This is the first meeting today,  
22 the 9th of January. Then we have the second  
23 community meeting on January 16th at Castellanos  
24 similar to this. Finally there will be a public

1 hearing on Thursday, January 25th, from 7:00 to  
2 8:00 p.m. in the main board room for CPS, which is  
3 at 42 West Madison.

4 If you didn't have an opportunity to make  
5 a comment or you don't feel comfortable saying  
6 something today, you can also go and send an e-mail  
7 to the e-mail address that's up there,  
8 transitions@cps.edu, for any comments or any other  
9 things that you would like to add to what's said  
10 today.

11 And so I'm now going to pass the  
12 microphone to the Chief of Schools, Minerva Sanchez,  
13 who's going to explain a little bit more.

14 MS. SANCHEZ: Happy New Year. Thank you very  
15 much for all of you being here for doing this. And  
16 so we're going to get started with a little bit of  
17 information that's up here, general information  
18 about the legal process, and so I'm going to read to  
19 you exactly what you're seeing up in front so that  
20 you can hear.

21 So that on October 1st is when -- I'm  
22 sorry, let me grab a copy here. So CPS published  
23 the draft guidelines for school actions. That was  
24 on October 1st.

1           On December 1st is when CPS proposed the  
2 school actions and sent notice letters and draft  
3 transition plans.

4           In January 2018 CPS created two community  
5 meetings and one public hearing prior to sending any  
6 recommendation to the Board.

7           As Cristina has already explained to you,  
8 on February 2018 or later is when CPS will make  
9 recommendations to the Board after the community  
10 meetings and the hearing. The Board will then vote  
11 on any recommended school actions. The Board vote  
12 may occur at the February board meeting or at a  
13 later date.

14           The consolidated school will operate from  
15 three different buildings but serving the same  
16 grades as they currently serve. In Cardenas the  
17 facilities will be at 2345 South Millard and 2406  
18 South Central Park serving grade kindergarten to 3rd  
19 grade. The current facility at Castellanos at  
20 2524 South Central Park will be serving grades 4  
21 through 8.

22           There will be no staffing impact on any  
23 of the Castellanos staff members. The current  
24 positions through the Office of Language and



1 Cultural Education will remain in place for the  
2 2018-2019. Consistent staffing of counselors and  
3 case managers for 2018 and 2019 will be in place as  
4 well. Safety technology will also be reviewed and  
5 installed at Castellanos.

6 The academic planning teams to plan the  
7 curriculum to ease the transition of students. And  
8 the Office of Social and Emotional Learning will  
9 continue existing supports and will determine the  
10 need for additional supports.

11 A district representative from the Office  
12 of Diverse Learners will be assigned to work with  
13 the families and the students to support the  
14 transition of diverse learners. Professional  
15 development and support staff will also be provided  
16 for transition services for STLS students.

17 So before the beginning of the school  
18 year -- I want to talk about the participation.  
19 Before the start of 2017-2018 school year, the LSC  
20 at Castellanos voted to request that the Principal  
21 of Cardenas would serve over both schools. On  
22 August 22nd, 2017, the Principal of Cardenas began  
23 serving over Castellanos. And then on November 2nd,  
24 2017, both LSCs requested a full consolidation of

1 both schools, right? Are we all on the same page?

2 Some key facts and figures now. Cardenas  
3 currently serves 555 students. Castellanos  
4 currently serves 601 students. The attendance areas  
5 for Cardenas and Castellanos will be unaffected  
6 since both schools serve both attendance areas.

7 So now I'm going to pass it back to  
8 Cristina. Thank you very much for your attention.

9 MS. CARRETO: So after that presentation, now  
10 we're going to open it up to public comment. I just  
11 want to remind you, please, that when I call on your  
12 number -- you received your little number outside,  
13 so when I call that number, please go up to the  
14 microphone next to it because it's important for you  
15 to say your name and your school for the people that  
16 are taking notes today.

17 And then we now have the woman who will  
18 be keeping time. She's going to tell you when you  
19 have one minute left, when you have 30 seconds left,  
20 and once your time is up. I want to remind you that  
21 this meeting ends at 8:00 p.m., so we're going to  
22 try to allow as many people as we can before that  
23 time to speak.

24 So now if you can go ahead and start

1 lining up. We're going to be starting with Nos. 1  
2 through 5.

3 MS. MORA: Good evening. My name is Sandra  
4 Mora, M-O-R-A. For the last 12 years, I have been a  
5 parent of both Cardenas and Castellanos. I support  
6 the proposal because throughout these 12 years I  
7 have seen how the children coming out of Cardenas,  
8 which is a Level 1 school, go to other schools, and  
9 this school is losing those students. Why? Because  
10 there's no follow through up until 8th grade. So  
11 they look for better opportunities mistakenly.

12 So when we propose this consolidation of  
13 both schools, what we are doing is giving our  
14 children the opportunity for them to have a good  
15 education from the kindergarten all the way to 8th  
16 grade. That is the main reason why I support this  
17 proposal.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. CARRETO: I'm going to change the  
20 microphones.

21 MS. RIVERA: Good evening. My name is Rosie  
22 Rivera, R-I-V-E-R-A. I'm part of the Castellanos  
23 Local School Council, and I'm the No Children Left  
24 Behind president and also the Bilingual Action

1 Council president, Bilingual Advisory Council  
2 president.

3 My stepdaughter and my child, they have  
4 been over on the side of Cardenas, and they have  
5 also been over here at Castellanos. And I'm really  
6 proud. I'm proud of Dr. Feiwell and Ms. Medina and  
7 Dr. Ramirez now because they have gotten my girls,  
8 my daughters to help them move forward. I am  
9 100 percent behind this becoming a reality.

10 So thank you and have a good evening.

11 MS. MORA: Good evening. My name is Luhna  
12 Mora, M-O-R-A. I support the proposal. I have  
13 three children. Two are left at Castellanos and  
14 Cardenas.

15 What can I tell you? I have a mix of  
16 feelings. Castellanos for me is a good school, and  
17 we're very happy because we have the opportunity to  
18 ask for a principal who we really have a lot of  
19 trust in. But because the principal who was there  
20 stepped down, this is now an opportunity but truly  
21 to take the name of Castellanos away. That's why I  
22 say I have mixed feelings.

23 MS. GARCIA: Good evening. I'm Rocio Garcia.  
24 I work with the organization ENLACE in Chicago

1 located in Little Village. I've heard many comments  
2 that are very positive about the school and the  
3 school environment. I support 100 percent what the  
4 parents are saying, and I'm very happy when they say  
5 such good things about all of the principals and the  
6 teachers and the success that the students have had.

7 Listening to the proposal since last  
8 year, I think the first meeting was here in  
9 December -- I'm sorry, November. What concerns me  
10 is that right now the positions won't be affected  
11 for the year 2018-2019 as was highlighted during the  
12 presentation and then the counseling and the case  
13 managers for students will also not be affected for  
14 the year 2018-2019.

15 But my worry is beyond that. The school  
16 should have a certain level of staffing, office  
17 workers and counselors. What will happen after the  
18 consolidation of these schools? That principal then  
19 becomes only one principal, so then what happens to  
20 the budget for that principal?

21 Also what I'm also worried about is that  
22 this consolidation is happening very fast. There's  
23 going to be three meetings in January while  
24 consolidations in other parts of the city have taken

1 place through a process that is much more than a  
2 month. It's taken up to two years.

3 Other worries that I've heard from  
4 parents or the other things that concern me, I would  
5 like it to be a longer process where there are more  
6 people present.

7 That's it.

8 MS. GONZALEZ: Good night. My name is Alex  
9 Gonzalez, and I am a teacher at Telpochcalli school.  
10 I grew up and I live in Little Village. Right now I  
11 live there. I am also one of the vice presidents of  
12 the area of CTU.

13 I do have questions. My questions are  
14 what is going to happen with the LSC and  
15 Castellanos? So both schools are going to have one  
16 LSC?

17 Another question is the building, the old  
18 building in 24th at Central Park, the annex which is  
19 next to Cardenas, this building is not permanent,  
20 right? So what is going to happen to it? Cardenas,  
21 is it going to continue using this building?

22 The other question is are there  
23 assurances or is there something in writing that the  
24 teachers, all the staff in both schools, they are

1 not going to be losing their jobs, their positions?  
2 Because they're working with your children. They  
3 know the community.

4 My other question is what is going to be  
5 happening to the services for community schools that  
6 they have at Castellanos and if those programs will  
7 continue if these proposals is approved.

8 Thank you.

9 MS. CARRETO: Now we're going to be calling  
10 from No. 6 to 10. If you have cards with numbers  
11 from 6 to 10, please come up. And I want to remind  
12 you that if you don't want to come to the  
13 microphone, you can send an e-mail to the e-mail  
14 that we told you about before with your comments.

15 UNIDENTIFIED MEMBER: Good night. I am a  
16 mother of kids in second grade in Cardenas, and I am  
17 here because I'm in support of the proposal of the  
18 consolidation of both schools because I think it's a  
19 good idea. It's a really great opportunity so that  
20 kids don't struggle from going from one school to  
21 the other. Not only that, the school, Castellanos,  
22 is at Level 2 and Cardenas is at Level 1. So I  
23 think that it would be a great academic change. I  
24 think it would help a lot.

1 Thank you.

2 (Ms. Calderon addressed the  
3 audience in English but was  
4 translated in Spanish.)

5 MS. CALDERON: Hi, my name is Cindy Calderon,  
6 and I am a teacher at Cardenas down the block. I  
7 can speak Spanish, but when I'm nervous, I stutter  
8 and forget my words, so it's better in English.

9 I just want to say that I am here on  
10 behalf of Cardenas to say that we definitely support  
11 this merger with Castellanos. I've been working at  
12 Cardenas for 17 years. I think 12 of them have been  
13 with Dr. Feiwell. He's an amazing leader. He's  
14 taking our school from nearly on probation or almost  
15 on probation to a Level 1 plus school. Of course  
16 it's part of the hard working teachers we have there  
17 too, but he is a phenomenal leader and will give you  
18 whatever you need to support you to do your job and  
19 to be the best teacher that you could be.

20 As teachers, we're also looking forward  
21 to getting to know the staff here at Castellanos and  
22 working together. So thank you.

23 (Following proceedings  
24 translated via Interpreter



1 No. 2.)

2 MS. GUADALUPE: Good afternoon. My name is  
3 Maria Guadalupe. I am a president here of the LSC  
4 at Castellanos. I am here as well to support the  
5 consolidation of the schools Cardenas and  
6 Castellanos because this is going to benefit all the  
7 students who are at the Level 1 plus at Cardenas.  
8 And with a principal who will be a leader for both  
9 schools, we hope that we're working to go up to the  
10 same level.

11 Right now we're working with a team and  
12 support staff of the teachers. Welcome to all of  
13 you. We hope to go up in levels.

14 MS. GUTKANST: Good night. My name is Norine  
15 Gutekanst. I am a teacher. I do not live in the  
16 community, but I am also a representative of the  
17 CTU. I am very interested in what the community,  
18 the parents, the teachers are saying. I'm not here  
19 in favor or against, but I am here to mention  
20 certain things.

21 I have been working for CPS for 30 years,  
22 and in this 30 years I have seen that the resources  
23 for schools have lowered. So my question, my  
24 concern is that if the community will be still --

1 will be able to demand strongly the resources if  
2 they don't come down, they are not lowered.

3 I imagine that you do have a secretary at  
4 each school that should continue in the next years  
5 because when a kid is sick, when a kid falls, when  
6 something happens, when mom has to call and ask for  
7 something, there should be someone that could talk  
8 to her.

9 Also we live in a city with violence. We  
10 need our social workers. We need our counselors.  
11 We need a PE teacher, music teacher. All of those  
12 resources that now I imagine the school has them,  
13 but they should continue to have them. And what I  
14 have heard is that there won't be a warranty that  
15 those things will be in place for next year. So I  
16 believe that CPS, if this is going to go forward,  
17 then there should be some warranties for the future  
18 indeterminately.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. CARRETO: Any speakers 11 through 15?

21 MS. PICURO: Am I going to reach this mic?

22 Good night to all of you. I'm very happy that we're  
23 all here together for our children, our community to  
24 support the principal and all the teachers who are

1 taking care of us, who are helping a lot of our  
2 kids.

3 And I am in favor of the proposal that  
4 has been made because if our principal at Cardenas,  
5 he is able to help out to be at both schools, then  
6 let's support him. Let's support the principal.  
7 Let's support the proposal.

8 Because I have three kids. Three have  
9 been at Cardenas, and they have also been at  
10 Castellanos. I think the proposal is good. If we  
11 have the same teachers, if the principal, if we see  
12 that he's capable of working on both schools, let's  
13 support the proposal. The funds should be the same  
14 because we have the same number of teachers, of  
15 students, and they are being used by our kids. We  
16 need to have the same funding.

17 So we all have to be together as a  
18 community so this school goes up academically as  
19 Cardenas is. So I am in favor. Good night to all  
20 of you. And my name is Gabriela Picuro.

21 MS. CARRETO: Do we have somebody else,  
22 somebody else who would like to talk?

23 So the meeting is going to be going on  
24 till 8:00 p.m. We're going to be here. If somebody

1 else wants to make a comment, please go and register  
2 first. I'm going to give you a moment to get  
3 registered, and then you have to come back and give  
4 your comment. If you already spoke and you want to  
5 say something else, you could come back and do it.  
6 We're going to continue with public comments. So  
7 from 11 to 14 we can continue.

8 MS. CAMACHO: Good night. My name is Leticia  
9 Camacho, C-A-M-A-C-H-O. I have lived here in this  
10 area for 20 years. My kids are in this school.  
11 They came out from Castellanos/Cardenas, and we have  
12 had a teacher who have pushed our kids to continue  
13 studying. I am one of the persons who a long time  
14 ago I proposed for the consolidation of the schools.  
15 Dr. Feiwell told me what do you think about that?  
16 This is an idea who gave me, one of the principals  
17 in one of the schools on the north side. So that  
18 was just a talk. But now that we have the  
19 opportunity, I was the first one supporting this  
20 proposal.

21 When our principal, I don't know for  
22 which reason, she left the school -- because my  
23 kids, one was in 8th grade, I had to take him out of  
24 the school because of that, because of the support

1 that we have from the principals. This was a  
2 personal decision. Maybe at that point I took it  
3 very fast. I did not know that if I was going to --  
4 if I took my kids out of the area, I was going to be  
5 taking resources out of the schools. So now I  
6 regret it.

7 But I'm also happy because my kids took  
8 the opportunity of going to a different school. My  
9 girl is in 4th grade right now, and she's very happy  
10 because she came back to Castellanos. She did not  
11 want to leave the area or Castellanos.

12 So thank you. Good night.

13 MS. OSEGUERA: Hello. Good night. My name is  
14 Consuelo Oseguera. I'm very happy to be hearing  
15 this with you because my kids' education is very  
16 important to me. I have two kids at the school.  
17 Ronaldo is 10 years, and Diego is in third grade.

18 When Ronaldo was going to come to  
19 Castellanos, I had plans to not send him to this  
20 school because of the negative things that I was  
21 hearing about this because I did not have any other  
22 kid here before that. The first year when he was  
23 here, I had a conversation with a teacher. I always  
24 talk to the teachers since they have been coming to

1 school. So I talked to them. The education of my  
2 kid is very important.

3 And the teacher told me that we have to  
4 support the community if we want our community to  
5 improve. So that was very important to me because  
6 the future of our kids, it's in the place where we  
7 are at. And we have to support. And if the level  
8 of Cardenas is in No. 2 -- I'm sorry, No. 1, then  
9 it's very important to support our principal. And I  
10 am in agreement. Why? Because I want this  
11 community, our kids to move on in terms of their  
12 education. So I want to support the proposal.

13 Thank you.

14 MS. CARRETO: Any person who has a card from 11  
15 to 20, 15 to 20, they can come up.

16 UNIDENTIFIED MEMBER: Sorry. Two minutes is  
17 not enough to say everything that I want to say.  
18 I'm going to try to speak very fast.

19 There have been several questions in  
20 terms of how fast the proposal was. I want to say I  
21 am a member of both LSC at Cardenas and Castellanos,  
22 and we had a due process before at LSC, both LSCs at  
23 Cardenas and at Castellanos. We reached an  
24 agreement. First we put everything on the table,

1 pros, things against. When we did this, practically  
2 we voted as LSCs. Our next step was to talk to CPS.

3 That's why I want to make it clear that  
4 maybe for some of you it was very fast this process,  
5 but the first thing that has to happen is that we  
6 have to unite as schools. And as all the other  
7 parents say, the kids that come from Cardenas, they  
8 also come from Castellanos.

9 That's the first thing, as parents, we  
10 want the best education for kids. We're parents.  
11 Those of us are here asking for these things.  
12 That's a reason why I want to make it clear that the  
13 process has been a little bit fast, but I disagree  
14 with many parents that the changes could be a little  
15 bit shocking for kids, also for parents, but in this  
16 life all of us have changes, evolution. Our life is  
17 evolution. So if we say that to our kids, we can  
18 make it easier for everybody and our kids.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. CARRETO: Do we have someone with a card  
21 that is No. 20? The meeting is open until  
22 8:00 p.m., so if you want to come back and say  
23 something else, another comment. If somebody has  
24 not spoken, you want to say something else, make

1 another comment, you could do it. But please go to  
2 the table to register. If you don't want to make  
3 comments here but you have opinions, you can send an  
4 e-mail to transitions@cps.edu.

5 I cannot close this meeting until  
6 8:00 p.m., so we are going to be staying here. I  
7 have to stay here. If somebody wants to keep coming  
8 and going, saying things, make comments, it's fine.  
9 This meeting is not to answer questions, but we want  
10 to hear your comments. So if we're not answering  
11 your questions that you have, it's not on purpose.  
12 But if you want to keep registering, coming back to  
13 the mic, it's fine. I'm going to be here for one  
14 hour and 20 minutes more.

15 Dr. Feiwell is going to come up and  
16 speak, but we have to wait for him to sign in first.

17 (Principal Feiwell addressed  
18 the audience in English but  
19 was translated in Spanish.)

20 DR. FEIWELL: Good evening. So welcome to the  
21 Castellanos school. So I've worked in this  
22 community for 15 years. I was the AP of Cardenas  
23 for three years. I've been the principal at  
24 Cardenas for 12 and the principal here at



1 Castellanos for the first year.

2 But I fully support this consolidation  
3 for a couple of reasons. We have a saying, students  
4 first, adults second. And what happens is when you  
5 have two separate schools, a pre-K to third and then  
6 a 4 to 8, there's a huge disconnect in their  
7 education.

8 And our goal, when I say our, I'm talking  
9 about me, the administration, the teachers, the  
10 ESPs, every staff member at both schools because we  
11 want our students to be successful whether they're  
12 going to high school, college, career readiness,  
13 whatever they're going to do. This allows our  
14 families and our parents and our students to have a  
15 strong curriculum from pre-K all the way through 8th  
16 grade and to have the same expectations over the  
17 course of their entire educational career and most  
18 importantly allows our parents to have a peace of  
19 mind that their children are going to be well taken  
20 care of from the minute they enter school till the  
21 minute they leave 8th grade.

22 I know there's lots of questions that  
23 come up with something like this, and we've had  
24 meetings where we have answered all of those

1 questions. My job as the principal is to make sure  
2 that all the supports are in place for the students,  
3 whether it's through the special ed services or  
4 enrichment classes. Nothing is going to change for  
5 next year.

6 My job is to make sure, which we've done  
7 successfully at Cardenas, we've lost \$500,000 over  
8 the last couple of years with budget cuts but have  
9 not lost a single position because we've made sure  
10 every cent is put through the students. That  
11 process will continue moving forward no matter what.

12 We have phenomenal teachers here. We  
13 have awesome teachers here, awesome staff members at  
14 both schools. Together with both staffs, the  
15 children are going to succeed. They're going to be  
16 even better. We're going to get them to a higher  
17 level. Castellanos is on its way to be -- we're  
18 going to get that 1 or that 1 plus rating this year  
19 for Castellanos, and then next year it's going to be  
20 an incredible journey as we bring the two staff  
21 together.

22 And the last thing I just want to say is  
23 that I'm not going anywhere. I just got my contract  
24 renewed for four years. So this is a commitment

1 from me as well to our community, to our kids, to  
2 all of you because I believe in our kids very much  
3 so.

4 Those of you who have been around  
5 Castellanos a long time, we're making a lot of  
6 changes. It's going to be an awesome -- we're  
7 re-branding the entire Cardenas/Castellanos  
8 community, and it's not two separate schools. It's  
9 one community, one school with three buildings. And  
10 the students are really going to make a lot of  
11 progress and prosper moving forward.

12 Thank you.

13 (Following proceedings  
14 translated via Interpreter  
15 No. 1.)

16 MS. CARRETO: Do we have anyone else who  
17 registered after Dr. Feiwell? So anybody with a  
18 higher number than 20, from 21 to 25? What number  
19 do you have? Do you have a card?

20 That's okay, go ahead.

21 UNIDENTIFIED MEMBER: So I am not really,  
22 really well informed about this as far as what could  
23 happen in the future. And a little while ago  
24 several people out there said to me, they said ask

1 or inform us about, upon consolidating these  
2 schools, it won't affect the budget, if it will be  
3 the same budget or it will increase or lower that  
4 budget. The way I see it is that it wouldn't affect  
5 the budget for our kids, that it shouldn't affect  
6 it.

7 I'm still in support of it as long as  
8 it's for the good of the future of our children.  
9 But I do want to be sure that the consolidation of  
10 the schools won't affect the budgets for the  
11 principal and also for the teachers and our  
12 children.

13 And so that's it. Good evening.

14 MS. CARRETO: As I mentioned previously, this  
15 meeting is only for listening to the comments, so we  
16 will not be responding to the questions. These  
17 questions have been asked, and they have been  
18 responded to in previous meetings. And in fact many  
19 of these answers were in the proposal for the  
20 consolidation of Cardenas and Castellanos. So I  
21 just want to mention that that whole proposal can be  
22 found on the CPS Web site, cps.edu.

23 Additionally we have another person who's  
24 now signed up to also speak. Can you please pass me

1 your card.

2 UNIDENTIFIED MEMBER: I don't truly think  
3 that -- two minutes is not enough to express  
4 everything that you think. So a little bit I was  
5 hearing somebody say, that they're afraid when our  
6 kids come from Castellanos to Cardenas. Yes,  
7 because we have a lot of fear because people say a  
8 lot of things, this or that will happen, there will  
9 be crime. We live in Little Village. This is  
10 something that we in our community are living  
11 through. Do we want it to change? Yes.

12 So I'm completely in agreement, though,  
13 with this proposal because we know this principal.  
14 We brought him on. Many people might say, wow, this  
15 was all fast. No, no, we've been doing this for a  
16 long time. We just haven't had the opportunity and  
17 we didn't let go of that opportunity. That's why we  
18 are here.

19 There's many people who are going to  
20 speak, but they're not here. They're not in the  
21 meetings. They're not with us to know, to be  
22 informed. For a little while, believe me, I found  
23 two people outside, and I said, aren't you going to  
24 go to the meeting? They said, no, I'm not going to

1 go. I bet those are going to be people to make  
2 comments about the meeting, but they're not here.  
3 They're not well informed.

4 I am very happy. I've seen this as  
5 something that represents progress for our kids.  
6 Will it be good? Yes. But remember, it's not just  
7 the principal's job. We, as parents, we have a lot  
8 to do with this. Our kids do also. This is a team,  
9 our children, the teachers, and the parents. We  
10 cannot leave the principal alone and just expect him  
11 to make wonders in Castellanos. He's done it in  
12 Castellanos. It's going to be No. 1.

13 But we as parents need to be conscious  
14 that if we truly want a school that gets better  
15 because we're talking about a school where this  
16 principal works. It's little kids up to fourth  
17 grade. But now what we're talking about -- we're  
18 talking about our kids will be almost teenagers.  
19 That age it's much harder, at least for me.

20 MS. CARRETO: Do we have anyone else? Yes. I  
21 don't even know what number we're at anymore. It's  
22 okay, though.

23 MS. OSEUERA: I'm at 26. My name is Consuelo  
24 Oseuera. Two minutes is not much. But we have more

1 time, and I'll sign up again. The thing is we all  
2 want to talk, but some of the people aren't here.  
3 The most important thing is that you're here and  
4 you're here and you're here and that I'm here. I'm  
5 here for the education of my children. I love my  
6 children. That's why I'm here. I think that  
7 Dr. Feiwell, he loves his job, that's why he's here.

8 One time I said something to a teacher,  
9 and she loves her job as a teacher. She's here.  
10 She's going to remember. I said, hey, teacher,  
11 really, did you make the right decision being a  
12 teacher? She said, yeah, why? I said, I only have  
13 three kids to take care of, and I can't even handle  
14 those three. She said, oh, yes, I made the right  
15 decision. And she's still here.

16 We're interested in the education of our  
17 kids. We love what we have. That's why we're here.  
18 I want that teacher to stand up because they are an  
19 example for us also, and they work with us.

20 MS. CARRETO: I just want to note that I know  
21 we say that two minutes is not much time, two  
22 minutes is not a lot of time, but it's because in  
23 other meetings sometimes we have tons of people that  
24 want to make comments, and so that's why we're just

1 being consistent with all of the different meetings.  
2 But if you want, you can sign back up and then talk  
3 again. And also the teachers can do the same.

4 MS. GONZALEZ: Alex Gonzalez again. Speaking  
5 as a resident of this area who grew up and was born  
6 in this area, if the proposal is approved, please  
7 remember that the previous parents have fought a lot  
8 to change the name to Castellanos, right? A woman,  
9 an author. The girls who live in this community, we  
10 wanted to have a school that would be named after a  
11 woman. So, please, if this proposal is approved,  
12 please remember that it's important that our  
13 daughters, that they have -- remember, it's  
14 important for us to have the names of influential  
15 women from our society.

16 MS. CARRETO: Anybody else? Has anybody else  
17 registered? I think we're at like No. 30. Or maybe  
18 35.

19 There's also people outside from the  
20 Department of the Office of Diverse Learner and  
21 Support Services and also the Office of Language and  
22 Cultural Education as well as teachers, Talent. If  
23 you want to go talk with them, they will be here  
24 throughout the meeting as well as after the meeting.



1 Oh, we have a student. Yay, students.

2 (Ms. Alvarez addressed the  
3 audience in English but was  
4 translated in Spanish.)

5 MS. ALVAREZ: Hello, I'm Brianna Alvarez. I'm  
6 a 7th grader here in Castellanos. I mean, I think  
7 the situation is a little weird for me. It's like  
8 ABC family turning into freeform. It's a little  
9 weird for me. It's hard to process. I mean, I feel  
10 like if you get used to it, it will be okay. But  
11 I'm really looking forward to the plans that  
12 Dr. Feiwell has for the school. I feel like it  
13 would really like help the school out a lot.

14 It's just I feel like I'm a 7th grader,  
15 so I was like a little bit looking forward to  
16 graduating from Castellanos, but I feel like if I do  
17 Cardenas, it's a little bit weird for me just  
18 because. So like for high school they're probably  
19 going to ask me like what school did you graduate  
20 from. Do I say Castellanos, or do I say Cardenas,  
21 or do I just say both? It's a little difficult.

22 I just feel like this will really improve  
23 the school. I am full on board with it. It's just  
24 a little bit hard to process, like I said before.

1 Same thing, same rules. Everything applies here the  
2 same as Cardenas. I'm looking forward to this  
3 school becoming Cardenas or staying Castellanos.  
4 Whichever decision you guys make, I'm full on board  
5 with it.

6 Thank you.

7 (Following proceedings  
8 translated via Interpreter  
9 No. 2.)

10 MS. CARRETO: Anyone else? We still have  
11 another hour here, so if there's anything else.  
12 People are looking at me like, hmm, what? We're  
13 here for another hour. So if anyone else wants to  
14 make another comment. You've got to talk on the  
15 microphone. You have to go up there to make sure  
16 the court reporter can hear you as well as the note  
17 taker.

18 It has never happened to me something  
19 like this in these kind of meetings. If you have  
20 any comment, you don't want to come to the mic,  
21 please send us an e-mail. Send an e-mail to  
22 transitions@cps.edu. And also a copy of the plans,  
23 you can find them in the Internet, in the Web page  
24 of CPS at cps.edu. You can read them and understand

1 a little bit more these plans if you don't know them  
2 very well yet.

3 As I said before, we also have here the  
4 Department of Diverse Learners and Supports and also  
5 the OLCE and also Talent, the department for Talent.  
6 Anybody who has questions about these changes,  
7 they're going to be outside during this meeting, and  
8 you can go out and ask.

9 And I want to remind you that if you want  
10 to talk, you have to sign up to be able to make  
11 comments. This is laughter because I'm nervous.  
12 This has never happened to me before. We're looking  
13 at each other and trying to figure out what we  
14 should do because this has never happened to us  
15 before.

16 All right, we have another person who's  
17 going to be talking.

18 (Ms. Benbrook addressed the  
19 audience in English but was  
20 translated in Spanish.)

21 MS. BENBROOK: You assume that I can't speak  
22 Spanish. My name is Denise Benbrook. I'm a teacher  
23 at Cardenas school. I've been teaching at Cardenas  
24 for 18 years. I love this neighborhood so much and

1 the people who live here. I'm just really proud to  
2 be a adopted member into Little Village.

3 We've heard a lot from parents, and I  
4 figured only one teacher spoke, so I should say  
5 something. And I just want to say I'm in full  
6 support of us consolidating, becoming one school,  
7 and that is because I have so much respect and so  
8 much faith in Dr. Feiwell. Anytime I've had a talk  
9 with him about the students at our school at  
10 Cardenas, he's always, as he said, put students  
11 before the adults, as it should be, because all of  
12 us who got into teaching got into teaching because  
13 of the students, right, because we wanted to make a  
14 difference.

15 And for a long time those of us at  
16 Cardenas never really knew what happened to the kids  
17 at Castellanos, which was kind of hard, because  
18 we've seen them since 3, 4, 5 years old and then we  
19 say good-bye to them at 9, and we just don't know  
20 because there wasn't a really good bridge between  
21 the two schools.

22 And for me it's not about a name change  
23 or anything like that. It's about knowing that  
24 there's going to be somebody in charge who cares

1 about the kids as much as the teachers do on a  
2 grassroots level because sometimes people don't  
3 think the principal cares about them as much as the  
4 teachers do, and he truly does. I'm very happy that  
5 I feel confident that the kids are going to have an  
6 amazing education all the way through 8th grade.

7 That's it. Thank you.

8 (Following proceedings  
9 translated via Interpreter  
10 No. 1.)

11 MS. CARRETO: Somebody else?

12 Again, I want to remind you that if you  
13 don't want to make comments here, you can send your  
14 comments to the e-mail, [transitions@cps.edu](mailto:transitions@cps.edu), and the  
15 consolidation plans can be found at the Web page  
16 [cps.edu](http://cps.edu). We also have representatives of Office of  
17 Diverse Learners and students who are in temporary  
18 living situations and also representatives of OLCE  
19 and also the Department of Talent. If you have  
20 questions, they're at the tables outside also behind  
21 the gym if you want to go make questions to them.

22 This meeting has to be open until  
23 8:00 p.m. It doesn't mean that you have to stay  
24 here with me until 8:00 p.m. We have to stay here

1 and keep this meeting open because maybe a parent  
2 will be coming after work at 7:30, they want to make  
3 a comment. So we have to be here until 8:00 p.m.  
4 today.

5 But if you want to keep come making  
6 comments, you can come to the mic or we can stay  
7 here. Talk to your neighbor if you want, but I have  
8 to keep this meeting open until 8:00 p.m., all  
9 right? If you're going to make comment, please let  
10 me know that you want to talk, that you already  
11 signed up, and give me your card.

12 I want to remind you that we will be  
13 having another meeting next Tuesday. I'm sorry, on  
14 the screen you can find the information. Tuesday,  
15 January 16. And it will be here from 6:00 p.m. to  
16 8:00 p.m. And also if you want to go to the  
17 meeting, educational meeting, that is going to be on  
18 Thursday, January 25th. But if you want to make  
19 additional comments at the next meeting that we're  
20 going to be having here next Tuesday, you can do it,  
21 okay?

22 (Discussion off the record.)

23 MS. CARRETO: We're just letting you know that  
24 we can stay here. We're just going to start putting

1 the chairs up. But we're going to be here until  
2 8:00 o'clock still.

3 (Discussion off the record.)

4 MS. CARRETO: We have a speaker.

5 MS. RUBIO: Good evening, everyone. Well, I  
6 would like to say that I'm -- my name is Carrie  
7 Rubio. I'm an alumni from Castellanos and Cardenas.  
8 I wanted to say that I'm really excited about this  
9 new change. I'm currently like in college, but I  
10 have four younger siblings that attend either or  
11 school. I always liked being part of going to both  
12 schools.

13 I felt like the transition -- it didn't  
14 feel much of a transition. It was the same  
15 welcoming environment in both. I also believe that  
16 Dr. Feiwell is a great principal and that he'll be  
17 able to greatly take on both.

18 Well, that's pretty much it. I really  
19 liked finishing up from both of them.

20 MS. CARRETO: Thank you.

21 I just want to remind everyone who's here  
22 that the next meeting is going to be next Tuesday,  
23 January 16th, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., same space.  
24 Then following there will be a public hearing on

1 Thursday, January 25th, from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. at  
2 the CPS Central Office building at 42 West Madison.

3 If you have any other comments to make,  
4 you can send an e-mail to the address at  
5 transitions@cps.edu.

6 That concludes our meeting for tonight.  
7 Thank you everyone for coming.

8 (WHICH WERE ALL THE  
9 PROCEEDINGS HAD.)



1  
2 STATE OF ILLINOIS     )  
3                                 ) SS:  
4 COUNTY OF C O O K     )

5                 I, Melissa A. Belice, a Certified  
6 Shorthand reporter of the State of Illinois, do  
7 hereby certify that I reported in shorthand the  
8 proceedings had at the hearing aforesaid and that  
9 the foregoing is a true, complete, and correct  
10 transcript of the proceedings of said hearing as  
11 appears from my stenographic notes so taken and  
12 transcribed by me.

13                 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I do hereunto set my  
14 hand at Chicago, Illinois, this 11th day of January,  
15 2018.

16  
17  
18  
19  
20                                 \_\_\_\_\_  
21                                 Certified Shorthand Reporter  
22                                 CSR License No. 084-003391  
23  
24

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